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Hudson - Song of the Manly Men - 1908

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THE SONG OF THE
MANLY MEN
AND OTHER VERSES



FRANK HUDSON

DAVID NUTT

PUBLISHED IN THE SAME FORMAT

LYRICS

By GERALD GOULD

Crown 8vo (1906), Wrapper, 1s. Second Edition.

FIRST PRESS NOTICES

The Tribune.—"A book of rare promise. Mr. Gould has unmistakably the poetic temperament, and in almost all the poems in this slender volume the true lyric note is struck. There is a spontaneity, a freedom from self-consciousness about such poems as 'Wander-Thirst,' 'The Earth-Child,' and 'The Sea-Captain' that is noticeably absent from the painfully produced effusions of many of our minor bards. And the outlook on life is sane, healthy, and joyous. Mr. Gould loves the open road, the starlit spaces of a summer sky, the sea with its ships and strange sunsets. The spirit of the vagabond sings in his verse :—

'Beyond the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let me be;
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-bye;
For the seas call and the stars call, and oh! the call of the sky!'"

The Spectator.—"For a young writer Mr. Gould shows a mastery of his art and a maturity of thought which are little short of marvellous. From a writer with so fine a taste and so pure a fire it is reasonable to hope for great things."

* * *The First Edition, issued in the summer of 1906, was sold out in a few weeks, and the Second Edition is nearly exhausted.*

41-

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THE SONG OF THE
MANLY MEN
AND OTHER VERSES

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MANLY MEN
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BY
FRANK HUDSON

LONDON
DAVID NUTT, 57-59 LONG ACRE
1908

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THE SONG OF THE MANLY MEN

HEARD from the wild and the desert,
Echoing back from the sea,
Faint o'er the din of the city
Floats the song of the men that are free.
There's a lilt in the strenuous chorus,
There's joy in our labouring when
We hear o'er the babble of weaklings
The song of the manly men.

'Tis heard 'mid the ringing of anvils,
'Tis heard 'mid the clashing of steel,
When the hosts go down together,
And the shell-slashed legions reel.
'Tis heard from the mine and the furrow ;
From prairie, and mountain, and glen ;
Like the roll of the drums in the distance
Comes the song of the manly men.

The fool in his ignorant bondage
May sneer at their fashion and speech,
The fop and the feather-bed workman
Make mock of the lesson they teach.

2 THE SONG OF THE MANLY MEN

The demagogues rant in the market
Of things high removed from their ken :
What are words—empty words—in the balance
With the deeds of the manly men ?

They are vertebrate, keen, and courageous,
These toilers, who raise the refrain ;
Their work swept away by disaster—
Undaunted, they build it again.
Yet ye fawn on your quacks and your idols,
Your dreamers and mountebanks—then,
When your country is suffering shipwreck,
You'll fall back on the manly men.

DEAD O' NIGHT HORSE

THE horsemen ride silently by in the night ;
No clatter of hoof or ringing of steel ;
Lit by a phospherent flicker of light
From the plume on the helm to the spur on the
heel ;
The foam from their bridles drifts white as they
go,
As flies in midwinter the wind-driven snow.

They half turn their heads in salute as they pass,
Grey faces lit up with a nebulous glow,
Grey faces of those who lie under the grass,
Grey faces of dead men I once used to know.
A harvest of death reaped by bullet and blade ;
Abroad through the dark rides the grey cavalcade.

There go Manners and Goring who fell at Dargai,
And Leslie the Lancer, and Dick the Dragoon,
And blasphemous Binks of the Blankshire M.I.,
And Donald (Scots Greys), " frae auld Edinburgh
toon,"
Last seen at Atbara, down Omdurman way ;
The sons of the Prophet had speared him next day.

The pebbly barren barrack square
I've trodden till my heart is sore,
The same old drill-patch everywhere
From Aberdeen to Templemore.
It broke my heart when a recruit,
A knock-kneed lout in hobnailed shoes ;
It taught me how to walk and shoot,
Keep clean and mind my P's and Q's—
The iron hand that broke me in,
The iron hand of discipline.

I've felt the cold in Khyber Pass,
I'd nearly sunstroke at Bombay ;
I've watched the Irawaddy's mass
Of water whirl by Mandalay ;
The sleepy Nile, where Dhabias glide,
Sahara's waste of dust and doom ;
I've dropped a soldier's tear beside
The grave of Gordon at Khartoum ;
I heard the lean Boer bullets hum
Their ghostly hymn of kingdom come.

Old comrades who have drunk with me
Of evenings in the packed canteen ;
Same service, and same company,
Till death passed chilly in between.
Their bones lie scattered o'er the maps
Where'er you see those small cross-swords,
Mixed up with some black heathen chaps,
While some sleep on with Dukes and Lords ;

Others lie planted by the priest
In white men's graveyards in the East.

And me! In God's name, what am I,
Who've broken all commandments ten,
That shot and shrapnel passed me by
And claimed so many better men?
The cholera that turns you blue—
Men sicken and half die from fright—
Ne'er touched me, but in passing slew
My comrades sleeping left and right.
I go unscathed while hundreds die,
Me! Me! In God's name, what am I?

I soldier on, the years go by,
The pipeclay's ate into my bones;
To leave the army means to die,
And better that than breaking stones.
The parish hearse? No! not for me!
I've soldiered faithful square and true;
Then lay me low with volleys three,
And drummers roll the last Tattoo.
I brought no joy—I leave no grief—
Halt! who goes there? Stand! "Next relief."

THE REAR-GUARD

A FRONTIER BALLAD

THE old Swat River was a-shining in the sun,
Sing hey! the little drummer from the land across
the sea,
Who left his mammy's apron-string to come and see
the fun,
A-drumming with a regiment of British infantree.

Oh the heartbreaking marches o'er the everlasting
hills,
With "Hurry up" and "Scramble up" and "Never
drop behind,"
With the bugles in the passes and the tense contralto
thrills
Of the squat Afridi bullets as they whistle down the
wind.

The foe were grim and hairy and their battle-cry was
gore,
The Colonel staggered forward with a bullet in his
breast;
The Maxims jammed for cursedness (they'd just come
out of store),
And the heathen toppled boulders down from off
the mountain crest.

The panting rear-guard's halted while the column
staggers on,

For passes are unpleasant when the foemen hold
the heights ;

There's the Captain, the Lieutenant, and the Colour-
Sergeant gone ;

There's a bed to-night in glory for the man who
stays and fights.

The odds are one to fifty, and the day has spent
its life ;

It's shoot your wounded comrade. Grit your teeth
and do it quick.

Better death in mercy given, than slow torture by
the knife,

For they ornament and carve you as we'd whittle
at a stick.

No surrender, no retreating, for the foe are all around,
See the quick fight wild and bloody and the dead
lie blenched and white ;

Then a drum starts madly beating with a stirring
martial sound,

It's the drummer boy in front there drumming
hard with all his might.

Oh the wild weird throbbing of the drum's familiar
tale ;

Hey! the merry martial music echoed back from
crag to crag,

While like fiends amid the shambles men are fighting
tooth and nail,
Shouting, "Hell before surrender ! for the glory of
the flag."

The pass is strangely silent and the spitting rifles
dumb,
For the rear-guard slumber sounder than they ever
did in bed ;
The drummer boy lies rigidly beside his broken drum,
And the moonlight's pallid glory lights the faces of
the dead.

The old Swat River is a-shining in the sun,
There's a weeping widow woman in the land across
the sea,
And she mourns the little drummer boy who went to
see the fun,
And reposes 'mid the heroes of the British infantree.

ILLUSIONS

Who will sail the seas with me?
Straining canvas, humming shroud;
Foam snow-white froths out a-lee
Like a riven fleecy cloud;
Take an able seaman's place,
Tarry hands are no disgrace.

Bacchanalian glasses ring,
Voices of good friends and true
In a deep bass chorus sing:
"We will sail the seas with you;"
And a sweet voice whispers low:
"Where thou goest I will go."

Making leeway, missing stays;
Skipper, blasphemy and brag,
A crew of "Dagos" and Malays,
Nothing British but the flag;
And when at last a wharf beside,
Crimped, drugged, and robbed, and then
Shanghaied.

And who will rattle dice with Death ?
The maddening drums beat on before ;
It's blood for blood and breath for breath,
Since Abel's murder—always war,
The hot, pulsating, throbbing thrill,
The lust to conquer and to kill.

'Mid broken limbers, rusted steel,
Tread lightly, for the dead are there ;
While overhead expectant wheel
The vultures in the tainted air.
A widow's voice, when all is done :
" Where did you leave my only son ? "

And who would seek the solitude
Of desert waste or lonely isle,
To walk alone in pensive mood,
Forgotten for a little while ?
Removed from turmoil, noise, and strife—
A lull in the great storm of life.

Go ! be a stranger. View the crowd
Amid the tramp of myriad feet,
Where Babel's voices roar aloud
In the inferno called the street ;
And you in silence pass unknown,
Obliterated and ALONE.

ILLUSIONS

13

O friendship, mirth, and fantasie !
O rosy light and ruby wine !
Not one hath borne me company
On this sad lifelong voyage of mine ;
Only a voice I seem to know
Says only this : " I told you so ! "

THE SHARK

BEWARE of the shark !
That lurks in the slime and the dark
'Mid the coral and weed ;
That follows the ships as they go,
Swimming swiftly and watchful below
For a man in his need,
Grey devil of cunning and greed ;
Ye swimmers take warning and hark,
'Ware, 'ware of the shark !

The sea may be mild
With the innocent calm of a child
Sound asleep at the breast ;
But swim out, and the black dorsal fin
Appears cruelly knife-like and thin,
As it cleaves the wave's crest.
Only God and His sea see the rest,
While the wave for a while flushes red
For a soul that hath fled.

Grey ghoul of the flood,
The ravenous tracker of blood,

THE SHARK

15

Swift to double or lunge:
The sexton of those (and the grave)
Who earn scanty bread on the wave '
When they take the last plunge.
Ah! no sweep of a well-moistened sponge
O'er the face of a close-written slate
Leaves a blank like their fate.

Ye mariners true,
Bronzed knights of the halyard and clew,
Bold, tarry, and tanned ;
Ye merchants and farmers as well,
Who sheltered from stormy seas dwell,
Go, harpoon in hand,
For the worst sharks of all are on land,
And they lurk in the slime and the dark :
'Ware, 'ware of the shark!

THE GOLDEN PAUPER

VAULT-LIKE his soul was darkness, where abode

Dead passions sheeted in the grave's attire

In aching blackness, save where faintly glowed

One spark, amid grey ashes of desire,

With life enough to cause him to aspire

To hoard ;

And dying reign a tawdry king

Where Virgil dreams, and Horace sweeps the

lyre,

Causing the shades with harmony to ring

Dulcet and low like distant chiming bells,

To purchase Paradise with other's hells.

The mirth, the pathos of the crowded street,

Not his the power to feel them, or to trace

In woman's wondrous eyes the legend sweet,

Or glean a poem from a passing face ;

He heard no music in the market-place,

For him the myriad silver tongues were mute ;

His God was gold, and in the human race

He missed the angel, but he found the brute.

So leper-like he lived, a thing apart,

A wretch without emotion or a heart.

"Gold! gold! more gold!" His daily prayer was this.

"To hear it ringing, and to see it gleam!
Take lust and hate; but leave me avarice.
Fame only withers, love's a foolish dream.
Gold! give me gold! a glorious glittering stream,
For my soul passion, in which none may join.
Among earth's money kings to reign supreme,
And wallow in my hoard of clinking coin.
What though these wasted arms are thin and old,
I plunge them elbow-deep in the chests of gold."

One night he dreamed he stood without the Shades,
The grey gatekeeper spake with scoffs and scowls.
"Wouldst thou disturb the sweet Elysian glades,
Thou Jaundice! with thy melancholy howls?
'Tis the abode of gods, and not of ghouls.

Hence! All thy wealth is straw the winds have strewn.

Hence! to the lizards, vampires, bats and owls;
Or with the dogs go bay the sickly moon."
He slammed and barred the gate, as thus he spoke;
The dreaming miser trembled, wept, and woke.

Sick unto death he lay. The icy hand
Of Nemesis lay chill upon his heart.
Riches were worthless. Gold could not command;
Or hoarded billions bid the form depart,
That muttered: "Man is dust, and dust thou art."

BY MY FIRE

Am I lonely by my fire in the winter wet and
chilly,

When the dripping casements rattle, and the
curtains close are drawn ;

When the wind around the gables blustering battles
shrieking shrilly

Its dirge of lone bleak mountain, and of desert
waste forlorn ?

'Tis thus its song is borne :

“ There are bergs around the Horn,

And the smother's thick to South'ard where the ice-
floes gird and yawn ;

And their bitter cold still lingers

In my breath, and icy fingers ;

Death and I will reap a harvest in the land before
the dawn ! ”

Ghosts gather round my fire and they gaze into the
embers,

And reproachfully they watch me lounging idly in
my chair,

There is Bill of Colorado, and I know that he remembers

A certain rocky canyon where a grizzly had his lair,

Sort of "Touch me if you dare!"

Grunting growling grizzly bear,

With his wicked pig-eyes winking through his shaggy tousled hair.

But we sent along a trifle

From the old repeating rifle,

And we feasted off the trotters of that surly grizzly bear.

There is Samba Singh Shikarri, who my footsteps oft attended

When I wandered baked and blistered in the land of the Rupee.

He reminds me of a moonlight and a tiger striped and splendid,

And a bullock in the jungle that was tethered to a tree.

And he looks askance at me,

Shakes his turbaned head to see

The tyrant who kicked him from the Khyber to Moree,

Sitting loafing by a fire

Where the white Sahibs toil for hire,

And the game is only "rabbits" and the dinner drink is tea.

There is Abdullah Mahamed from the Soudan hot
and sandy,
Also Van der Boom the Dopper from the land of
drift and krantz ;
There is Gusufzai the hillman, who loots everything
that's handy,
And whets his knife and gurgles when the British
troops advance,
Just to join the frontier dance
With the bayonet, butt, and lance ;
Where they mutilate the wounded, and the weaklings
stand no chance.
Where the soldier beats the nigger
With the bayonet and the trigger,
And the gen'ral gets the credit who did nothing else
but prance. '

Sometimes lonely when on sentry looking out into
the dimness,
Sometimes lonely 'mid the clamour of a busy babel
town,
Sometimes lonely on the yard-arm when by reason of
its slimness
The swaying sagging footrope might give way and
let me drown ;
But ! there's no one here to frown
On my pipe and dressing-gown,
No hardship, cold or hunger, and no bores of great
renown.

I would rather this my fire
Than be lord of half the shire,
And a nightcap suits me better than a massive golden
crown ;
And I'd not exchange my " nightcap " for the burden
of a crown.

THE SWAGMAN

I HAVE starved on crowded pavements, in the
solitudes athirst,
I have laid me down despairing in the desert thrice
accursed;
I have seen the sun set blood red when the world
turned to its rest,
O'er the ocean by the coast-line of the parched and
aching West;
I have heard the breakers thunder, and the spinning
storm-rack sweep
Where the frowning cliffs of Queensland rear their
ramparts by the deep.

Gay groups of laughing children freed from school
they pass me by,
And wistfully I watch them, for a childless man
am I.
When I see the fond young mother with her children
at her knee,
I feel alone, forgotten; for no woman cares for me.
When I see the lovers walking in the evening after-
glow,
It sets me sadly thinking of a time long long ago.

Long long ago. Aye surely. 'Twill be years since
she and I
Stood by the paddock sliprails and watched the
daylight die ;
And I marvelled at her beauty. Like an angel she
was fair,
With the radiance of the sunset like a glory on her
hair ;
And I kissed her, and we whispered how we loved
each other so ;
And I almost felt in heaven. Aye ! that was long
ago.

Loveless my way and lonely ; gloomy and over-
cast,
My footsteps wake the echoes of sad memories of the
past.
Dead leaves in place of flowers. Dead leaves and
blasted hopes,
Dark valleys of the shadow, through which the
swagman gropes.
Like Cain, I prowls an outcast. A vagabond I
roam.
I have passed ten thousand homesteads, but have
never found a home.

In silent awe and wonder up at the spangled sky
I gaze, where night sits high enthroned in regal
majesty,

With myriad brilliant hosts of stars her trailing
 robes to gem,
And planets throng by companies to form her
 diadem.
O silent spirit of the night, thy solace to me bring ;
For when asleep it's all the same : a swagman or a
 king !

FOSSICKING

Fossicking up in the mountains blue,
With nothing to worry or wish ;
Watching to see the red specks show through
The dirt in my old tin dish.
Mates and diggers have died, and gone
Back to the lifeless clay ;
Out of the lot I still keep on
In the same old fossicking way.

Puffing my pipe in the ole patched tent,
Watching the billycan boil,
Where nobody comes to collect the rent,
And I pay myself for my toil.
No ole missus looks crabbed and cross,
Or nags of a washing day ;
I do my own growling and act my own boss
In the good old fossicking way.

Down yonder ? Oh yes. I've heard it before,
How the fellers swarm round like ants,
'Mid the clatter and ramble and rattle and roar
Of the big gold companies' plants.

There are sharks there too. There's the "salted "
claim,

And gambles that ruin or pay;
But I'll keep on at the safe old game
In the safe old fossicking way.

I have the stars in the sky for friends,
And I hear the night wind speak,
There's a tune that changes but never ends
In the waterfall down at the creek.
The blossoms serve me for children young,
The rocks for counsellors grey,
And I work, and wonder, and hold my tongue
In the same old fossicking way.

THE BUSH FIRE

DWELLERS ye be in the sheltered city,
Civilised, orderly, street by street :
Lounging 'neath awnings striped and pretty,
Languidly talking about the heat.

Strolling in shade (and of heat you're carping),
Cooling your drink with the tinkling ice ;
I wonder if angels, when tired of harping,
Talk thus about Hades, in Paradise ?

A dweller was I in the lone bush, swelling
In hill after hill, where the world is wide ;
Out of its woods I had hewed my dwelling,
Matching my strength with its barren pride.

Stubbornly patient and persevering,
Toiling till dark from the glint of morn,
When years had passed I had made my "clearing,"
And the bush breeze rustled amid the corn.

Broader each year grew the trim cleared spaces,
Farther retreated the thicket and tree,
Glad grew the home with the children's faces,
That served for a link between God and me.

THE BUSH FIRE

31

Ye who make moan in a noonday torrid,

Think on the wind-hounded flame that flies ;

Pray that no breath may fan your forehead,

That licked the sight from my scorching eyes.

The ravenous roar of the flames devouring,

The smother of sparks where the strong man strives,

The lone bush home, and the children cowering,

The maimed blind mourner that still survives

HIS BIRTHDAY

HUSTLE round the teacups, Missus,
Get the boys a tot of rum ;
Just another milestone this is
On the road to kingdom come.
Bring the rouser from the shanty,
Call the swagman from the track,
For my sand runs low and scanty,
Birthdays come, but don't come back.

You remember how we battled
From the bush a home to win ;
How the blessed raindrops rattled
On the roof, and then came in
All around, the mournful timber.
Wife ! that seems so long ago ;
Then our arms were lithe and limber,
Now our hair is white like snow.

But away with reminiscing,
I'll look out and stop my yarn—
Well, I'm darned, young Bill's a-kissing
Susan over by the barn.

She, our youngest, gwine ter marry—
All have left us, one by one.
No! I would not have them tarry;
But—it's hard—to live—alone.

Here they come, both friend and neighbour,
With the "hands" in my employ,
Rouser—gritty from his labour—
"Glad to see you here, me boy.
What! a swagman?—join the party,
Leave your burden by the gate;
Here's a welcome stout and hearty
On the day I celebrate."

.

Gone! the birthday party's finished,
Wife, our journey's nearly done;
Yet our love burns undiminished,
Our old hearts still beat as one.
On the walls the firelight roaming,
Flings dark shadows gaunt and high,
We'll sit here amid the gloaming,
Musing on the days gone by.

JONES B.A.

THE gum-trees sighed that the world was wide,
And the times were out of joint,
So that was the way that Jones B.A.
Arrived at Golden Point ;
And the gum-trees fluttered their blue leaves up,
And fluttered them down again
When Jones of Cambridge pledged the cup
Of friendship with Charlie Spain.

And Jones was tall, and his hands were small,
Of an elegant Cantab type ;
And Charlie Spain was blotched and plain,
With a mouth that was made to swipe.
His nose turned up, and his mouth turned down,
And his wolf-lapped gums were blue,
As he grinned, " By gum ! friend Jones, old chum,
I'll stick to you through and through."

Orion swung, where the Pleiads hung
Just over the bush to north ;
And the south-wind sighed that the world was wide,
As the ill-matched pair set forth.

And that old-time night flung its black and white
Full-tinted on grass and tree ;
While the moon turned silver and ebonite
The bends of the Yarrowee.

The gully was found in the rising ground
Where the silver cascade fell,
Flinging its spray o'er the sodden clay
Where the mute red nuggets dwell ;
And Spain bowed low as a praying monk
As his fingers tore the mould ;
And his huge form shrunk, and his eyes rolled drunk—
Mad drunk with the lust of gold.

There's a gold-filled bag in the Cantab's swag
Rolled ready to take the track,
And his heart expands to those old-world lands
To which he is going back ;
There's the front-row stall at a music hall,
There's the rhythm of dancing feet,
And the flicker o' nights of the London lights,
And the bustle of Regent Street.

And a fain fond girl sets his brain awirl
(Ah, those witching low-necked gowns !)
She is sweet and fair, as he left her there '
In her home on the Hampshire Downs ;

And so he unravels fond fancy's chain
To be gilt by the washings—"Half"—
And he's waked from his dream by Charlie Spain
With his hollow dog-toothed laugh.

A friendly hand on his shoulder laid,
Says Spain, "No more we'll roam,"
And the sun blinks once on the keen blue blade,
As the knife goes plunging home.
He falls, and the bloodstained bosom heaves,
And the eyes grow fixed and grey,
While the gum-trees flutter their palsied leaves
For the passing of Jones B.A.

Now scarred and seared is that valley weird
Tucked under the mountain's flank,
And it is decreed that the sons of greed
Shall always draw it blank.
If by night you go to that vale of woe
You will hear the languid chaff
(Which was always the way of Jones B.A.)
And Spain with his dog-toothed laugh.

PIONEERS

We are the old-world people,
Ours were the hearts to dare ;
But our youth is spent, and our backs are bent,
And the snow is on our hair.

Back in the early fifties,
Dim through the mists of years,
By the bush-grown strand of a wild strange land
We entered—the Pioneers.

Our axes rang in the woodlands,
Where the gaudy bush-birds flew,
And we turned the loam of our new-found home,
Where the eucalyptus grew.

Housed in the rough log shanty,
Camped in the leaking tent,
From sea to view of the mountains blue,
Where the eager fossickers went.

We wrought with a will unceasing,
We moulded, and fashioned, and planned,
And we fought with the black, and we blazed the track,
That ye might inherit the land.

Here are your shops and churches,
Your cities of stucco and smoke ;
And the swift trains fly, where the wild-cat's cry
Once the sad bush silence broke.

Take now the fruit of our labour,
Nourish and guard it with care ;
For our youth is spent, and our backs are bent,
And the snow is on our hair.

FAIR HAVEN

I CLOSED weary eyes to the whirl of the city,
The heart-breaking, nerve-wracking, pitiless strife ;
The angel of slumber descended in pity,
And peace, perfect peace, was my portion that
night.

The tree-girdled homestead again stood before me,
The smoke from the chimney rose curling and
blue ;
The horses at pasture came up when they saw me,
And neighed at the sliprails to welcome me through.

The scent of the hayfield familiar and fragrant,
Arose like the ghost of a long forgot joy ;
The old giant trees spread their boughs to the
vagrant,
Who played 'neath their shade long ago when
a boy.

A rest for the weary, a truce with affliction,
An end to the yearning of pilgrims who roam ;
The calm evening fell, like a hushed benediction,
And mother came out and I felt it was Home.

Castle or cottage—the loftiest, lowliest ;
Home though our fate, or wide leagues of the sea
Divide us for ever—the fondest and holiest
Thoughts of our exile are always for thee.

I heard the wise words by the solitudes spoken
In lotus-like calm of the bush in repose ;
I lay down to sleep amid silence unbroken,
Till dewy dawn blushed like an opening rose.

When death's turbid waters, unbrooking resistance,
In darkness and chaos close over my head,
May I pass where the mountains loom blue in the
distance,
And day weds the night robed in saffron and red.

Where the moon o'er the bush rises regal, and golden
The spears of her light shimmer down through the
trees ;
Where the earth mother whispers of days that are
olden,
And gathers her children again to her knees.

THE FOUR COASTS

LASHED in the surf's sullen thunder terrific,
White the sea-horses race in to the shore,
Green the great combers roll from the Pacific,
To leap at the cliffs with a ravenous roar ;
Black-snouted rock, and jagg'd reef of pale coral,
Seas rent asunder and churned to white yeast ;
For the lone bush hears the sob and the quarrel,
By those gaunt frowning ramparts we rear to the
East.

Monstrous blue billows come slothfully reeling,
Bright gleams the sun upon headland and ness,
Flocks of white seagulls fly poising and wheeling,
And the soft summer south-wind is half a caress ;
The song of the surge where the sea greets the river—
The white winging sails at the old harbour-mouth—
Throned on her hills in the blue haze a-quiver,
Australia in beauty looks down to the South.

Sets sullen the disc of the sun o'er the ocean,
Painting with glory the sky overhead ;
The sea smooth as glass without ripple or motion,
Is purple and splendid and barred with blood-red.

Then high heaven's dome draws apart as a curtain,
Unveiling the cloud-pillared realms of the blest ;
And glow fades to glow grander still, while uncertain,
The lights of Australia blink out to the West.

League after league swing the brown barren high-
lands,
Head after head, and long reach after reach ;
Here and there, everywhere, little green islands,
Tall slender palm-trees, and gold sandy beach.
Bleached bones of sailors with ribs of lost vessels
Mingle and rot on the smooth sandy floor,
There where the blue bay so lovingly nestles,
Where the green plantains o'ershadow the shore.

Islands volcanic and seas strewn with lava,
Islands unknown and untrodden by man.
Out from the ports of old slumbering Java
Flit in their fleets the swift catamaran ;
Green idle isles from New Guinea to Flores,
Scowled at by rocks in a dull leaden wrath ;
Dry silver sand from Port Darwin to Torres,
And that's how Australia looks up to the North.

A STATESMAN'S PASSING

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE RICHARD SEDDON

Born June 22, 1845 ; Died June 10, 1906.

IMPERIAL banners droop, and muffled drums
In mournful cadence beat from post to post ;
From lonely frontier, camp, and fortress comes
That solemn roll from Britain's far-flung host ;
Grim ships of war half-mast their ensigns fly,
Five nations weep, and grief has bowed her head ;
Stricken, the multitudes pass slowly by—
The Empire mourns her dead.

To him the gain, to us the bitterness ;
Ye monarchs, nations, peoples, East and West,
Ye little men, who fawned on his success,
Go learn of him who now is laid to rest ;
His paths were straight, his records sterling gold.
His the keen mind to purpose and to plan,
And on those firm, kind features now behold
The ruler and the man.

His was no brain to harbour paltry schemes,
Or peevish jealousies, or vulgar spite ;
His were grand thoughts, high-born of grander dreams,
Broad as the Empire which he helped unite.

Ye little men, pride-swollen (yet like sheep),
Your petty pomps and childish triumphs bring,
And take a lesson, where he lies asleep,
Uncrowned, but yet a king.

His was the form e'er foremost in the strife,
He nobly strove to gain the common good,
That great Knight-Templar of the strenuous life;
His motto, "God and loyal brotherhood."
He was the state; as such he was allied
To poor and rich, to people great and small,
Beloved he lived, the realm personified,
The guardian of them all.

And thus at parting, as he left us here,
He called to us, "Kia Ora"¹ from the train;
"Good luck to Ballarat," which caused the cheer,
That made the startled echoes ring again.
Now round the world the muffled drum-beat swells;
For he has passed, and we can only bow,
And be consoled by knowing that he dwells
In God's own country now.

¹ Pronounced "Kee Ora."

BY THE RIVER

Down in the vale, where the low-laughing waters
flow,

Whirling in eddies and flashing with spray ;
Down in the pasture-lands, where the green grasses
grow,

Death and to-morrow still seem far away.
Song of the waters that hurry and glisten
'Neath the green willow-trees drooping to listen.

Over the sand-bars in silvery cadence,
Rising in symphonies ; melting away
Sweet as a dulcimer, laughter of maidens,
Part of an angel-song wafted astray.
Days that have faded and memories throng to us
Down where the river runs singing its song to us.

" Here and gone by in the space of a second ;
Yet ever present in metrical flow,
Tarrying never ; the ocean has beckoned,
The waves whisper ' Onward ! ' and onward I go.
Bearing in melody, laughter, and glee,
The tale the blue mountains send down to the sea."

To the sad stranger disconsolate standing
By the old footbridge with never a mate,
Shafts of misfortune fast friendships disbanding,
Turn hope to grey ashes and love into hate.
Stranger disconsolate, burdened with sorrow,
What will the darkness bring ? What of to-morrow ?

“ Stranger, take heart, though disasters surround
thee

Down in the dust 'mid the tumult and din ;
What though defeat hath in mockery crowned thee,
Struggle on, comrade, and never give in.
Till fickle fortune removeth her ban,
Hope for the best, and fight on, like a man.”

Thus to the maiden who comes in the gloaming
To list to the sibilant story I weave,
Her mind far away in a wonderland roaming,
She thinks the dream thoughts of the daughters
of Eve.

Facing the West hung with banners of glory,
She wistfully ponders the same old sweet story.

“ Maiden, Love's chain may be links of red roses,
And trust be your garment with peace for its
hem,
Yet oft amid flowers the serpent reposes,
And roses though sweet have sharp thorns on
the stem.

Honest true-hearted your lover—just one—
Too many sweethearts will leave you with none.”

Robed in the eventide purple and umber,
Skies that flush crimson, and melt to red gold,
The old tired world turns again to his slumber,
And mists from the valley rise ghostly and cold.
I hear from the shadows like harp-strings a-quiver,
The low silver song of the wandering river.

THE "SHINY"

I'VE said farewell to India, to the palm and deodar,
To the singing of the women coming softly from afar;
 How their silver anklets jingled,
 And the old-world music mingled
With the measured throb of tom-toms from the back
 of Bo Bazaar.

O'er the tree-tops in the jungle falls the sunset's
 crimson glare,
From the moss-grown Buddhist temples comes the
 call to evening prayer ;
 Weary toilers home returning
 Where the charcoal fires are burning,
And the scent of lotus flowers fills the heavy hazy
 air.

The night descends o'er India, the city's hum has
 ceased,
The charpoy for the native and the coral for the
 beast ;
 The hungry tiger prowling,
 Hears the grey wolves' distant howling,
Till the morning paints the picture of the splendid,
 shining East.

Unchanging ancient India, a thousand creeds are
thine,
From the cult of gentle Buddha to the blood on
Kali's shrine ;
To a grave the Ganges hallows,
Float the dead from out the shallows,
And the reflex of their burning turns the water red
like wine.

I can see the palace gardens where the slender palm-
trees sway,
And the shrines of hideous Bhandas where the sacred
monkeys play ;
I can see the glint and flutter,
Of the lights of old Calcutta,
On the swift relentless Hoogli rushing down towards
the bay.

I can see the columns marching through the dust for
many a mile,
I can hear the spluttering rico' of a shot from a
Jezail ;
I can hear the jackals crying
Round the place where dead and dying
Lie gashed by ghoulish women at the foot of the
defile.

There are vaults beneath the Jumna where the sun-
beams never play,
Where the crazed and naked Fakirs alternate howl
and pray ;

Where in trances lie the chosen,
Into deathlike stillness frozen,
While their spirits throng the temples at Benares
far away.

To a sway of heathen priestcraft such as Egypt
never knew,
To the jewels and the bangles and the maids of
dusky hue,
To the seething countless numbers
Of the mighty East that slumbers,
I have said farewell for ever; I have bade the East
adieu.

THE SKIPPER

BRAIN and muscle and sinew and nerve,
Sight and hearing and speech,
Subtly fashioned to truly serve,
Dependable each on each ;
The lightning thought that the brain commands,
The pulse at the throbbing wrist ;
All wrought by the cunning master hands
Of the Master Mechanist.

This is my ship then, rigged and sparred ;
All's well in the engine-room,
With the valve-pumps working steady but hard
In the race for the crack o' doom.
I, though the storm-stung seas may overwhelm
Or the hungry tide-race rip,
Am placed at the stubborn, kicking helm,
The skipper of my own ship.

Calm and smooth as a mirror lies
Life's sea with a guileless grace,
Yet o'er the horizon slowly rise
Dark clouds with their sullen face ;

And one beside, with a tempting smile,
Points to the slumbering deep ;
So I let him take the wheel for a while,
And I lie down to sleep.

I wake, the thunder's hurtling crash,
And the spindrift's blinding sweep,
To see by the lightning's lurid flash,
The ghost-white breakers leap ;
And ahead the Harpies scream and wait,
While astern the combers hiss ;
And he at the helm is steering straight
For a sheer black precipice.

I seize the spokes of the straining wheel,
And I strike at the demon form,
And I bring her round with a lurch and reel
In the mouth of the howling storm ;
So the dancing deathlights cease to burn,
And the barque rides well and free,
As we leave Hell's gnashing teeth astern
And steer for the open sea.

But with me at the helm he always stands,
That fiend with the eyes aglow,
Gripping the spokes with his claw-like hands ;
And he never lets them go.

THE SKIPPER

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Waiting and watching for sleep or slip,
While I pray through the starless nights,
To remain the skipper on my own ship
Till I see the harbour lights.

OLD MOLOCH

I PEER o'er the wave on the ocean's broad floor
From the armoured barbette of a king's man-of-war,
Pampered and tendered without and within,
As clean as a mirror my sleek metal skin ;
The pride of the ship, and the gunner's chief pet,
The long "forty-pound" in the forward barbette.

They hoist, haul, and slew, and parbuckle me down,
From my stronghold on board to the wharf by the
town ;
My flanks that before knew no rust-speck or taint
Are smirched and besmothered with drab-coloured
paint ;
I'm placed on a carriage of special design,
A gun from his Majesty's ships of the line.

And now to the clank of a derrick and chain
They are hoisting me on to a truck of a train ;
I speak with a voice that bedevils and stuns,
And I've something to say to those new foreign
guns.

Our army ? you know ! that weak cry of " Disband,"
So farewell to the ocean, I've business on land.

By hill, plain, and valley, the sun blazing hot,
I follow the track where the carcasses rot ;
By twenty gun-horses I'm drawn in my pride,
While the sailors who tend me tramp on by my
side.

We move upon business. Let foemen beware
Of the big naval gun with her nose in the air.

Unlimbered and loaded, in action at last,
Where the swift, searching bullets are dropping men
fast ;

O'er yells of defiance and cries of despair,
The enemies' shrapnel is cleaving the air.
The foe are entrenched behind tree trunk and
bank,
And the wicked pom-poms are at work on our
flank.

The bolts that I hurl, lo ! they splinter the rock,
And the very earth trembles aghast at the shock ;
'Neath the green sullen vapour, that smokes to the
skies,

Lie corpses distorted with death in their eyes.
Down tumbles a gun, and one debt has been paid,
By the long forty-pound of the Naval Brigade.

Yet louder the tumult and fiercer the fight,
And the pom-poms fall back from the hill on our
right ;

I speak yet again, and a red flash is seen,
And a roar rends the sky. It's the foe's magazine
I've busted. Our general mutters "Well done,"
"Hurrrah for old Moloch, the sailorman's gun."

DOCTOR GRAY.

("There are guardians")

BEYOND all creeds, above sectarian strife,
Pure and right-minded, honest as the day,
In usefulness he lived a noble life,
Treading in humbleness the narrow way ;
A mind to lean on when temptations sway,
A hand to grope for when we come to die,
We lose a sterling man in Doctor Gray,
A man who was a man, and scorned a lie.

Grey kindly eyes with glint of tempered steel,
His shrewd sharp glance like a keen sword-blade
flashed,
Making the atheist half wish to kneel,
And the loud scoffer falter back abashed.
His was a wit that pleased but never gashed,
No venom marred the savour of his jest ;
He lit new hope for those whose hopes were
dashed,
And whispered, " Duty, God will mind the
rest."

And so his barque has crossed the harbour bar,
That salvaged souls on life's rough treacherous sea,
And through the storm-rack like a guiding star,
A pilot to fair haven's sheltering lee.
We may not hold his creed, mayhap that we
Have other gods, or do not care to pray ;
We loved him for his worth, his honesty.
All men have lost a friend in Doctor Gray.

THE HAPPY HUNTING-GROUNDS

In the happy hunting-grounds,
 Virgin country wild and free,
Where the wind o'er tree-top sounds
 Like the murmur of the sea.
Through the boled, long, rustling aisles
 Bounds the deer from thicket flushed ;
Cool, green woods for miles and miles,
 Regal forests, stately ; hushed.
Not a single grass blade crushed
Marks man's footfall faintly writ.
 Here the pure dawn never blushed
For the shame that hid from it,
 Here the willows, only, weep ;
Cascade laughter all one hears.
 Human wolves and human sheep
Howl nor bleat now in these spheres.
Silver-beached sad silent meres
 Mirror deeply tree and sky.
Here the fish-hawk swoops and veers,
 Here the wedge-flocked wild duck fly.
Wizened cypress, mossed and hoar,
 Wise, gaunt greybeard of the wild,
Whispers a sage counsellor
 To the young oak, a Spartan child.

60 THE HAPPY HUNTING-GROUNDS

In the dim distance mountains piled
Titanic, robed in rolling mist,
Heave heavenward clear and undefiled
Their towering peaks of amethyst.

When the grim huntsman's bugle sounds;
Life's short shot arrow droops to fall.
For me, those happy hunting-grounds—
Be penniless, but lord of all.

THE END

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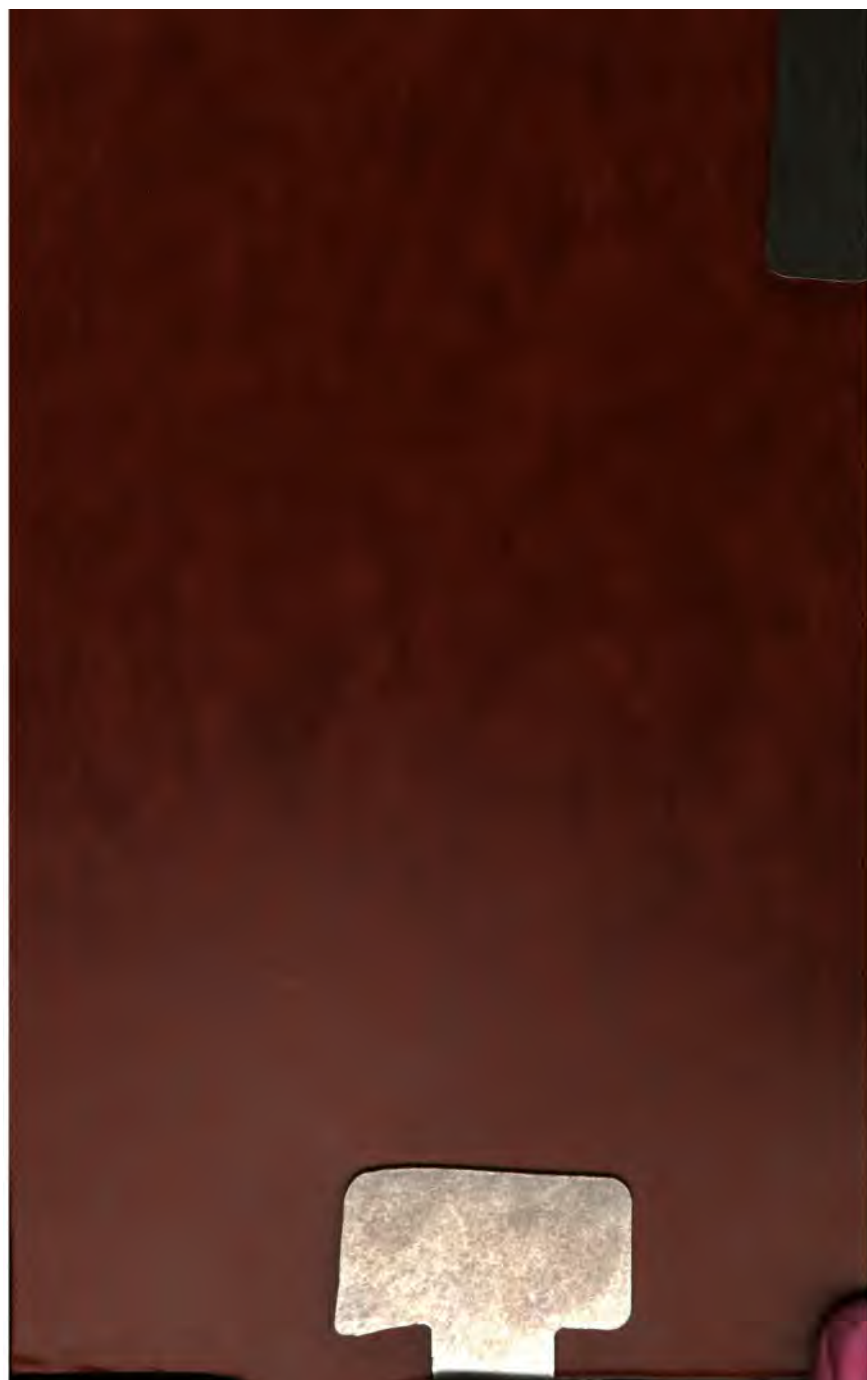
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